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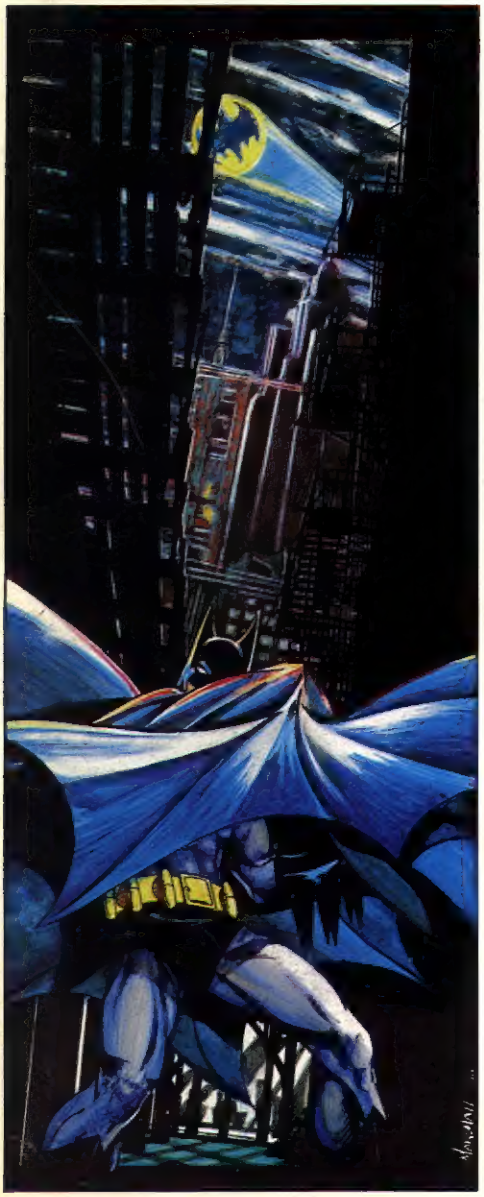
1979 COMIC ART CONVENTION

BATMAN



MARSHALL ROGERS

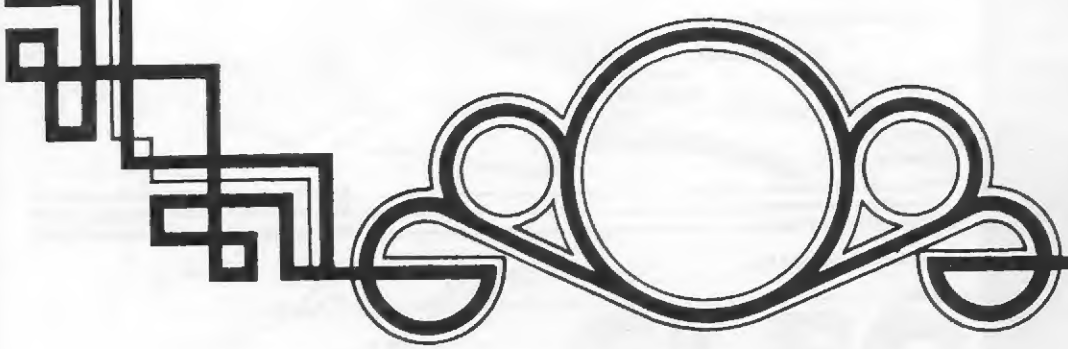
CONAN

JOHN BUSCEMA

SUPERMAN

CURT SWAN

WELCOME TO THE 1979 COMIC ART CONVENTION



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INTRODUCTION AND DEDICATION

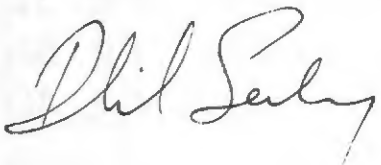
This Comic Art Convention has honored many famous writers and artists during its twelve - year duration. Each deserved our thanks and appreciation for a contribution to the field of comic art. The writers have created worlds and then populated them with interesting people. The artists have given us glimpses of sights we never expected to see. We have honored also the creative editors and publishers who produce good material for us to enjoy. They deserve our thanks, too.

Some others have found their own rewards at the Conventions. Dealers reap their profits; critics find material to gripe about; fanzine publishers find new audiences; politicians in the comics arena have found a soapbox to promote themselves as heroes; and the merry circus entertains and rewards us all.

Let me dedicate this Convention to one very special person this year, to the Comics Fan who makes all the rest happen. That's you. You read the comics and so you support all the others. You attend efforts. You change the shape and contents of comic books more than any writer, artists, editor, or publisher, simply by supporting or ignoring their products. You could spend your time and money on T.V., movies, sports, or other hobbies, but you give your attention to comic books. You are not here because of us, Comics Fan. We are here because of you.

Thanks for coming. Glad to see you.

Sincerely,



Phil Seuling

IN MEMORIAM

Basil Wolverton and Spacehawk, companions of my Prep school days and ever after . . .

Jerry De Fuccio

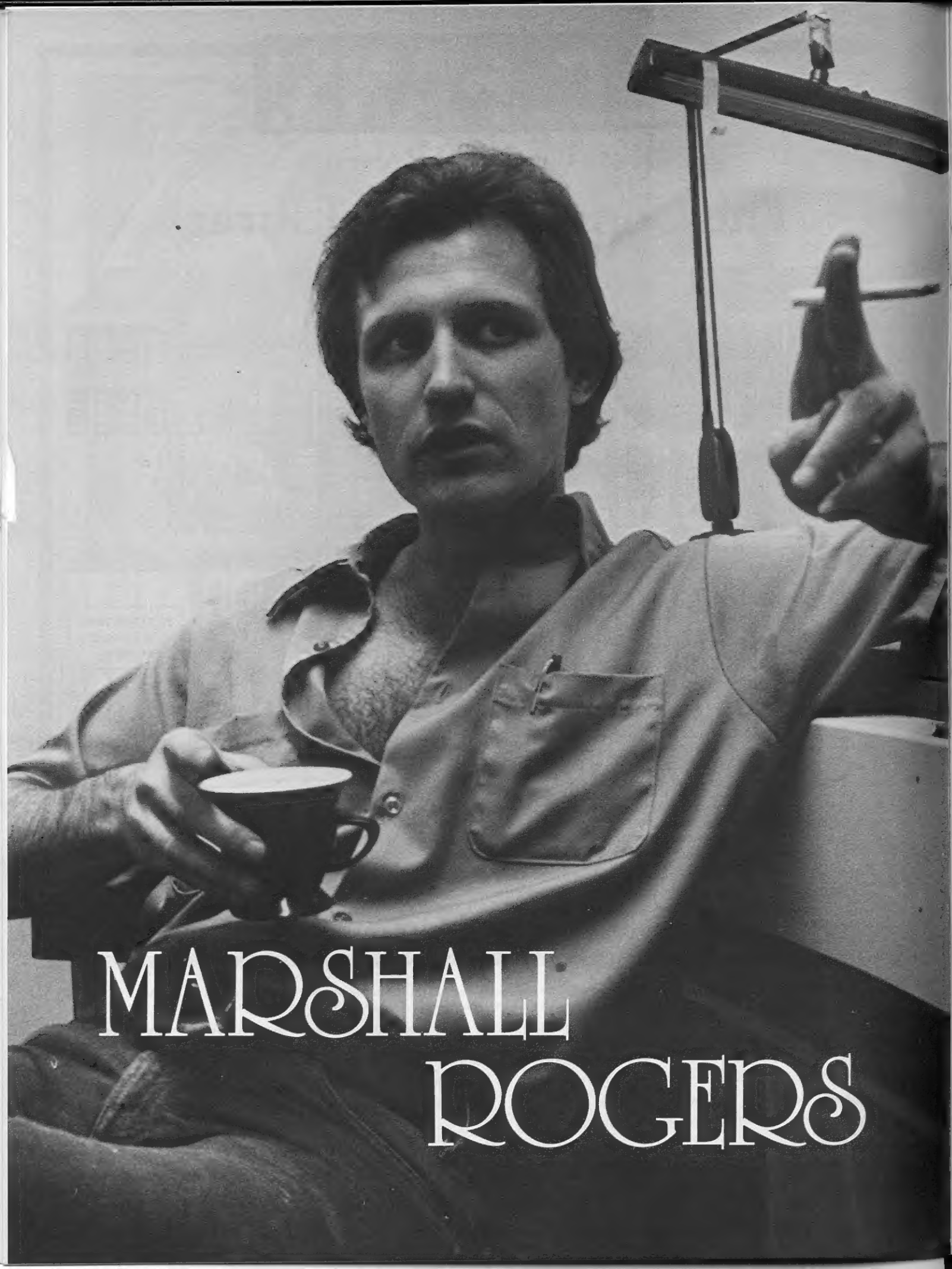


PHOTO BY BOB KEENAN

I'm going to tell you about magic. I'm supposed to be giving you gory details about Marshall, but I don't know that many of them. I know he was born January 22, 1950, around noon, in Flushing, because I planned to do a horoscope on him once. but since I've been too busy to get at that, I can't reveal his hidden neuroses and lusts. I know that he looks like the Joker, which can't hurt in an artist who made his entrance with the Batman. And I know he enjoys a good time, preferably beginning somewhere after midnight, and sometimes involving playing in the freeway. Other than that, we'll have to examine the larger picture. We'll have to examine his magic.

Now, if you think Marshall blew **your** socks off when you first saw his work with the incomparable Terry Austin in DETECTIVE, my first look was an even bigger blast! Let me set the scene for you. I'd quit Marvel in April of '76, and had three things firmly in mind. One: I was getting out of comics. Two: before I went, I was going to pull out all the stops on the DC strips I'd asked for. And three: since most of DC's top artistic talent had been bled off by Marvel when Marvel had been climbing to the heights, and since I was the first to head for the Warner Building as Marvel came crashing back down the other side, I was going to need a miracle to get a decent artist for DETECTIVE. There was no regular artist on the strip, and the people who were available...well...

Luck seemed to rear its head for a while, when Walt Simonson and Al Milgrom agreed to do the honors - even though Walt had just decided to give most of his time to Marvel, and Al was perpetually overburdened with work. But the first two issues just didn't gel. Walt could only do the quickest of layouts, and Al's diligent inks couldn't take up all the slack. So, we were back where we started. No, further back, because those were big fish to have eliminated from the talent pool - and because I knew by then just how hot my vision of the Batman was going to be. I could see it all in my mind's eye - but I had had such visions before, only to have the final printed page look like it had been drawn with Professor X's foot. By 1976, people would read my stuff no matter who drew it, but comics is a hybrid medium, and

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PHOTO BY BOB KEENAN

THE STORM BROODED FOR DAYS BEFORE BREAKING, BUT NOW THERE'S NO HOLDING IT BACK!
GREAT SHEETS OF WATER POUND DOWN LIKE CRASHING OCEAN WAVES--
--SMEARING THE SIGHT OF SILVER ST. CLOUD AS SHE FIGHTS TO PEER UPWARD INTO THE STORM'S FULL FURY--
SMEARING HER SIGHT--BUT NEVER COMPLETELY OBLITERATING WHAT SHE SEES--
JOKER! YOU LUNATIC--THERE'S NO PLACE YOU CAN GO FROM HERE!
I CAN GO OVER YOUR DEAD BODY, BATMAN!
LOVELY WEATHER FOR FISH, ISN'T IT? OR DID I SAY THAT?
I WANT YOU TO HEAR ALL MY BEST LINES BEFORE YOU DO YOUR DIVE INTO THE DAMP SPONGE!
HIS BADGE! THE ACID--
13

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if one half of the effect is botched, the lasting impression is botched, and there's no way around that.

I need a miracle now, and that was just for openers. What I **really** needed was magic.

And then...

Marshall (and Terry) had tried their hand at **DETECTIVE** with Bob Rozakis's **Calculator** series, and the response that was just then coming in was positive and more. In the midst of those dark days, Julie Schwartz called me in California and asked if I'd work with these new guys. "Hell, yes!" I said. I knew nothing of Marshall's work beyond those first stories, but it looked as if he didn't play by the "rules," and I'll take somebody who's learning but trying over a burnt-out "star" any day. "Hell, yes!" I said. "Let's try."

Cut–

It's now February 1978. My wife Terry (no relation to Austin) and I are in our mountain villa in Mallorca. I'm upstairs writing my novel (once **Best of Both Worlds,** once **Edge**, now **Max**), immersed in lands and language far away from the full scripts I'd left in New York almost a year before. And then our village mailman rides his moped up the dirt path to our door to deliver a package from Julie. Inside, two copies each, are the last five issues of Marshall's and my DETECTIVE. Terry grabs one set, I take the other, and for the next several hours, the villa is silent save for scattered "Oh"s and "Ah"s.

It was magic.

And back in America, and in England and Canada and in all our ships at sea, you all had already felt the same.

Sometimes the gods just get together and smile down on things. Other times they frown. With comics in decline, the fact

THERE'S A LOT OF THINKING GOING ON TONIGHT... VERY SERIOUS THINKING...
...BUT DON'T DESPAIR, ACTION-LOVERS! YOUR DAY IS DAWNING SOON!
THEY SAY THE BATMAN CAN SOLVE ANYTHING--
--BUT HE'S UP A STUMP ON THIS ONE! "DOES SHE OR DOESN'T SHE?"--
--AND WHAT IF SHE DOES?
I'VE GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS TO KEEP MY IDENTITY SECRET, FOR THE BEST OF REASONS!
--BRUCE WAYNE MUST REMAIN A SAFE RETREAT!
I CRIED NO TEARS WHEN MAGDA BECAME A MONSTER!*
*SHE AND HUGO STRANGE LEARNED THE SECRET IN 'TEC #471-472! -- JULIE
BUT I DON'T WANT SILVER TO GO THAT ROUTE--
--I JUST WANT HER--
--PERIOD!
--MY WORLD GOES CRAZY SOMETIMES!
--I'M IN LOVE WITH THAT GIRL-- THE REAL ME, UNDERNEATH ALL THE MASKS!
AND STILL, THE MAN BENEATH THE MASK CAN'T BE CARELESSLY REVEALED! MY SECRETS ARE MY PROTECTION FROM DEATH!
EVER SINCE JOE CHILL STEPPED OUT OF THE DARK TO GUN MY PARENTS DOWN--
HELP! HELP, POLICE!
Copyright © 1979 DC Comics

that Marshall was around at all was something just short of a miracle. The fact that he stepped right into a strip for which he had an exact and total feel is getting even closer. And the fact that he kept right on stepping, to **Mister Miracle** and others with DC, to the head of the Comic Book Creator's Guild, and now to Don McGregor's new book all in only two years, is surely magic.

I said that I could envision what my strips should look like. Sometimes, when I saw the artist's vision, I was disappointed. Sometimes, I felt we'd met on equal ground. But only five times in my comics years did I feel that the artist had taken off from where I'd left him - and four of those times, the artist and I had worked side-by-side. But Marshall, without ever having met me at the time, gave me everything I asked for, and **knew** everything I didn't ask for.

Now it's July '79, and you've got some top guests at this con. Curt's been **the** artist on **the** comic character for just about ever. Big John Buscema's feel for the human figure is unsurpassed, and likely to remain so. But when you want that special midnight darkness, that chill of shadows and silence that can only come from **between** the penciled lines, then call on Mr. R. He's inside your mind somewhere already.

And he's magic.

Steve Englehart

POGO
OH, BOY OH BOY! IS I READY!
FOR WHAT?
WHATSAMATTER YOU GUYS... DON'T YOU GOT NO BASEBALL SAVVY?
BASEBALL SPRING TRAINING SEASON IS UPON US! NOW IS THE SEASON OF LOAVES AN' FISHES... NOW IS THE HOUR OF BLOSSOMS AN' MAY... NOW COMES UMPIRES FAINTLY SUSPICIOUS... NOW COMES NIGHT- BASEBALL WHERE ONCE THERE WAS DAY...
KEEP YO' HEAD DOWN.
I AN' HIM AN' YOU WILL BREAK YOU IN FOR SPRING TRAINING.
3-5
ME CHUCKIN' THE BALL.
READY?
WANK!
GOT IT!
GO GIT IT!
GO GIT IT!
DRAWN FOR JERRY DEFUCCIO FROM THE DECK OF THE SAME NAME — WALT
THRU FEN, FETLOCK AN' FOREST FAST...
THRU SWAMP, SINK AN' SWANEE SWIM...
THRU HEAVEN BLUE AN' CLOUDY SKY...
1961 WALT KELLY
THRU AIR AN' BREEZE AN' ATMO-SPHERE...
THRU BLUBBLE, MUDDLE AN' UNKNOWED TROUBLE
BLUB
SPLOP
HE DROPPED IT.
WE AIN'T READY.

This Sunday page, March 5, 1961, is published as a special preview of **Pogo: The Okefenokee Star** issue four for those attending the 1979 Comic Art Convention. In the magazine it will be published along with an interview with Jerry DeFuccio of MAD Magazine to whom Kelly autographed and gave the original.

ONCE AND FUTURE POGO

Once upon a time there was a comic strip star, a possum named Pogo, who was internationally syndicated and had millions of faithful fans. It was a happy time for the critters of the Okefenokee Swamp.

But in July 1975 after 26 years of syndication the ultimate gloom for any newspaper comic strip descended on Pogo Possum. Syndication was completely discontinued. Pogophiles around the world were cut off from their favorite marsupial. Primeval darkness cloaked the satire, wit and laughter that used to be generated by the swamp critters created in cartoonist Walt Kelly's imagination.

"In "People" magazine Pogo Possum bravely announced to the world he did not have a terminal case of publish-or-perish. He claimed to be merely "between engagements." The cynics laughed. They knew the possum was through. In the world of comic strips, amid all the laughter and adventure, loss of syndication means only one thing, the death of a comic strip character.

Soon Pogo had dropped from sight. "May peace be with him," said the more sober of the cynics. They also inquired where flowers might be sent.

Well friends, for the first time we are at liberty to disclose what transpired that fateful summer of 1975 when the dark shades of gloom, nonsyndication and obscurity fell full force on the Okefenokee Swamp.

"As it was summertime we went off to Camp Siberia to regroup," says Pogo.

"Our spirits were kind of low so we sang the Camp Siberia song as we marched through the swamp.

"We're the cheerful, cheerful Charlies on our way to our cheerful camp!

"Happily our leader we folly through the evening dues and damp.

"Oh, it's onward ever onward boys, thru cheerful, cheery wisteria.

"Back to the spot what's fraught with joys to cheery Camp Siberia."

"This helped some," remembers Pogo, "but all of a sudden things started to happen halfway through the second verse."

"Oh Camp Siberia's the place to cheer! We'll cheer with every breath.

"And we'll be cheerful Charlie's, cheerful to the DEATH."

"DEATH," shouted Howland Owl. "DEATH? I didn't become a cheerful Charlie to preside over the dissolution of me! I didn't join up for DEATH...I joined up for LIFE!"

"Now as you know," says Pogo, "we aren't exactly dumb animals so we set our brains to thinking. The situation was grave so we raised the old circus warcry 'Hey Rube' and ol' huckster incarnate P.T. Bridgeport loomed over the horizon.

"Well ol' P.T. had an ace up his sleeve. It seemed he knew this human up in Bridgeport, Connecticut who was certainly as big and almost as furry as a bear who wanted to publish a magazine devoted to the swamp critters. If he had been a bear instead of a human he would have been perfect. As it was, probably because he was introduced by ol' P.T. Bridgeport and came from the city of the same name, Selby Kelly let this proposal stew and simmer for a full year before giving it the go ahead in October of 1976. The first issue of **Pogo: The Okefenokee Star** appeared in May 1977 and the rest is history. So if anybody ever asks you how the Pogo magazine got started you have just heard it from the possum's lips."

"To date **Pogo: The Okefenokee Star** has been published three times. In 1977 and 1978 it was an annual, but this year Selby Kelly has been promised three issues and three issues it will be.

Highlighting issue #4 due out late summer will be interviews with Jerry DeFuccio and Wally Wood and through special permission of Bill Gaines, a reprinting of the parodies of Pogo published in MAD magazine. There will also be some Worl' Series quality swamp-style baseball.

The fall issue is still in the planning stage.

Pogo: The Okefenokee Star is very much a project in which Walt Kelly's widow, Selby, takes an active hand. The magazine's editor/publisher Bill Crouch Jr. commutes the 60 miles from Bridgeport to New York City to consult with her on the planning of the issues and to check over final layout before going to press.

"Our goal is to give Pogo fans an interesting combination of Pogo reprints, new Pogo art, biographical and analytical articles on Pogo and Kelly, reprint Kelly's own writings, and dig out new facts and artwork to date unknown. For example we are now tracing down a pseudonym that Kelly used in the 1940's to illustrate children's books which we had never heard of before," says Bill Crouch Jr.

"With the permission of The Walt Kelly Estate we are also generating two national news releases a year. We are very proud to have brought 'Deck Us All With Boston Charlie' back to newspapers at Christmas Our first July 4th news release is published here."

You might think the **Pogo** magazine is all the swamp critters have going. Wrong. Simon & Schuster have continued to re-release in new format reprints of previously out of print Pogo books. Also Gregg Press of Boston has published the first ten **Pogo** books in hardcover library editions. This is very important as the early Pogo books were all paperbacks and hence many libraries never brought them.

Selby Kelly hasn't been to many comics conventions so the panel early Sunday afternoon on "Once and Future Pogo" will be a rare treat for Pogophiles who want questions answered on Pogo's future. We know the future is bright and exciting, but only Selby knows the exact plans.

SAFETY MESSAGE FOR JULY 4th

BANG!
HOW DO YOU LIKE MY SAFE AN' SANE FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION?
FINE..JES' FINE!
Copyright 1978, Selby Kelly, Executrix
BANG!
BANG!
SAFE, BUT MEBBE NOT SO SANE.
MEBBE NOT SO SAFE, DAGNAG IT.

OKEFENOKEE SWAMP, GA — Even the swamp critters in Walt Kelly's comic strip Pogo Possum know a safe July 4th celebration is just plain common sense. However, Porky Pine and the urbane turtle Churchy LaFemme do differ with a very boisterous raccoon over "safe an' sane." This public service message is sponsored by the official Pogo Possum Fan Club, Box 2311, Bridgeport CT 06608

JOHN BUSCEMA

A Few Random Remembrances of JOHN BUSCEMA by Roy Thomas

These remembrances will **have** to be random, 'cause otherwise they'd fill a couple of volumes and set the publication schedules of CONAN, SAVAGE SWORD, and THOR back a couple of months.

But, where to begin?

Ah yes. The beginning. Always a good place.

A typical day around the Mighty Marvel Bullpen (which then consisted of about five people) circa 1966-67. I was doing my assistant-editorial thing when production chief Sol Brodsky called me over to ask my opinion on some sketches that Stan had just given him. (And if you've got to ask "Stan who?" then you shouldn't be reading this article or even crossing the street to come to this con without your mother.)

Anyway, the sketches --- I forget that they showed, though they were superheroic in nature -- were beautiful. Perhaps the heroes were a bit **too** beefy, their hands a bit delicate for girder-wrenching of the Marvel type, but the work was gorgeous. I eagerly asked Sol whose they were, and was informed they'd been sent in by a former Timely artist named John Buscema, who in recent years had been doing commercial art.

(He had also, I found out later, been drawing comics for various other companies over the years, including **Roy Rogers** some years back and comicbook adaptations of movies like **Helen of Troy** and the Steve Reeves **Hercules.)**

Stan, I learned, loved the work but was a bit concerned to make certain that he could learn to draw "Marvel style" -- an irony, since John was later to have a great deal to do with **refining** that style and co-writing a book on the subject with Stan. In addition, one of Marvel's top artists -- who shall remain nameless, since everybody's entitled to a mistake now and then -- had shrugged off the illoes after looking at them, with a callous, "Oh, he's just an illustrator."

Thus, John was set to work doing finished pencils over Jack Kirby's breakdowns for a S.H.I.E.L.D. story, which Frank Giacoia then inked. The resulting work showed very little of what John himself could do, of course, since he was sandwiched and cradled in between two top professionals.

Stan then did a couple of "Hulk" 10-pagers with John himself. The result was beautiful drawings, but a drawing-style that was somewhere between Kirby, a muscle magazine, and "Rip Kirby." Beautiful, but still no cigar.

ART WORK REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM **THE ART OF JOHN BUSCEMA** COPYRIGHT © 1979 SAL Q PRODUCTIONS

PHOTO BY BOB KEENAN

Not that Stan was about to let John Buscema go back to the world of commercial art if he could help it; John had been doing quite well drawing Coke bottles and flashy cars and the like, but confessed to a total boredom. So Stan decided he should be apprenticed to fill-ins for a month or two, to get his bearings. That way, he could work and rework a job until it was just right.

I wanted him.

John's work on THE AVENGERS is, in its own minor way, almost as important as his epoch-making CONAN THE BARBARIAN or SILVER SUFER -- and certainly was as financially successful for Marvel as either, in comparative-time terms.

When I saw the first pencil pages of what became AVENGERS #41 come rolling in -- Hercules juggling a gigantic barbell while Hawkeye shoots arrows from a trapeze and the Scarlet Witch does a handstand--I flipped. From that time on, John Buscema became my top choice for penciler (and/or inker) of THE AVENGERS.

They were fun times both for me and, evidently, for the readers: the Black Widow facing the fiendish Psychotron; the first Red Guardian; the introduction of the Vision and his robot creator, Ultron; Magneto at the U.N. and we branch off from there into SUB-MARINER, which was a wee bit less successful commercially but no less beautiful.

Later, John was unceremoniously pulled off THE AVENGERS to do SILVER SURFER, and (despite a second successful stint together on THE AVENGERS which brought forth the second Sons of the Serpent and a few other wonders) we worked less together for a while.

In 1970 he was my first choice to do CONAN THE BARBARIAN. Later, he became the second (and to date only) penciler to do more than the merest handful of issues. Within a year, CONAN had become one of Marvel's top sellers and we'd launched a revived, all-Conan SAVAGE TALES and, soon after, SAVAGE SWORD. We've also worked together on FANTASTIC FOUR, THOR, TARZAN, RED SONJA, X-MEN -- you name

it! If I wrote it and John was available and willing, he drew it!

The only problem is that, through all this, John staunchly and sincerely maintains that he hates drawing superheroes.

Which is a bit like Michelangelo confessing he never had much use for chapels.

My own feelings have been expressed many times, on many occasions, to many people -- both to the total Buscema freak who hardly needs to be converted, and to the occasional mypoic fan who (dazzled in some cases by lesser lights who use a plethora of inklines as a substitute for good drawing, anatomical knowledge, and capable storytelling) doesn't understand quite why my comicbook confederates and I feel that John ranks up there with the greats.

My parting quote: "John Buscema can draw anything he can think of -- or what a writer can get him to think of."

Trust me on this: There aren't many of 'em around.

WELCOME TO THE CONVENTION
from
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STILL NUMBER 1!
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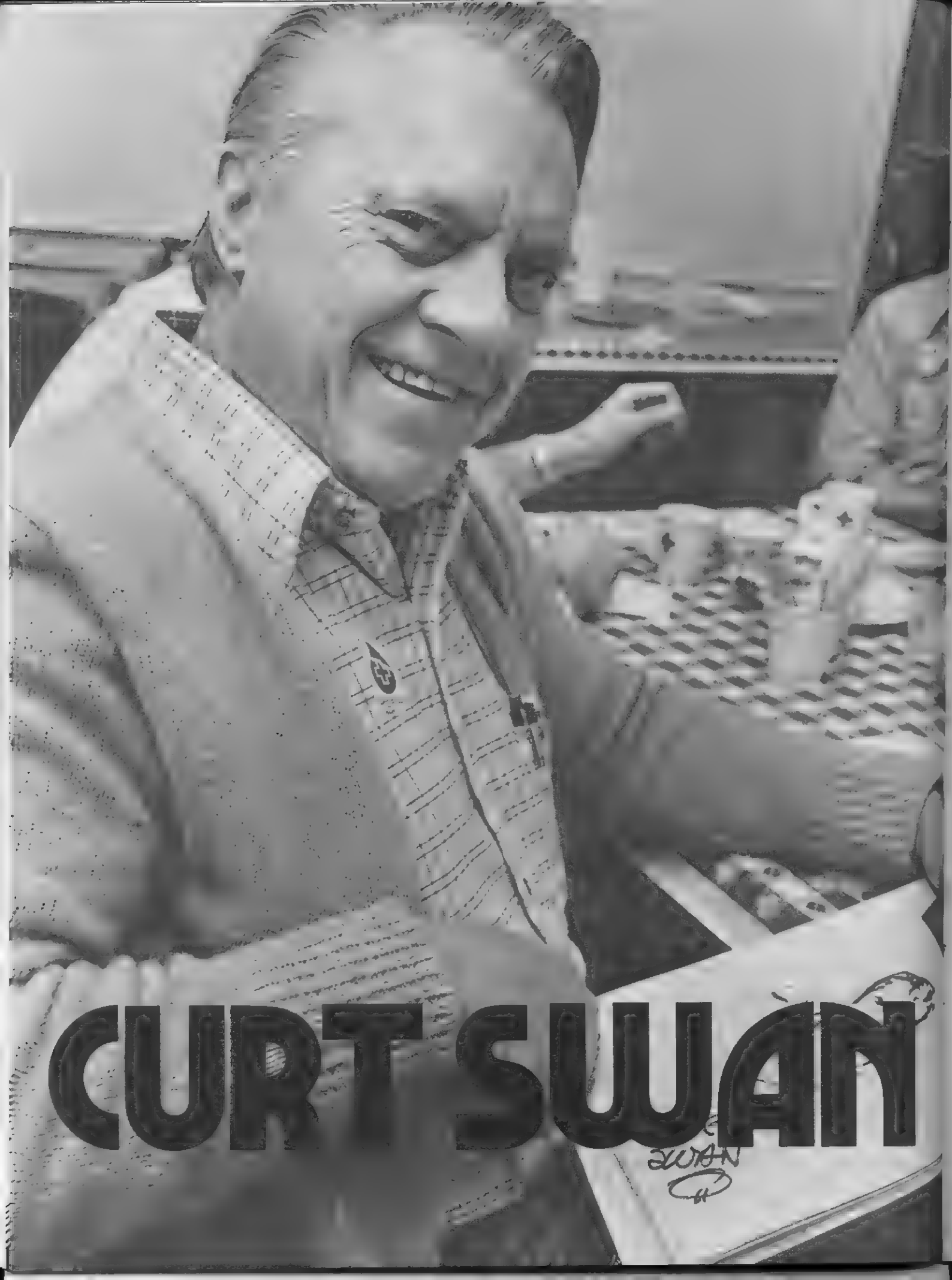
GARCIA LOPEZ & GIORDANO



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Look closely into Clark Kent's eyes as he turns to wink at you in acknowledgement of your shared secret, and you can see the twinkle in Curt Swan's eyes.

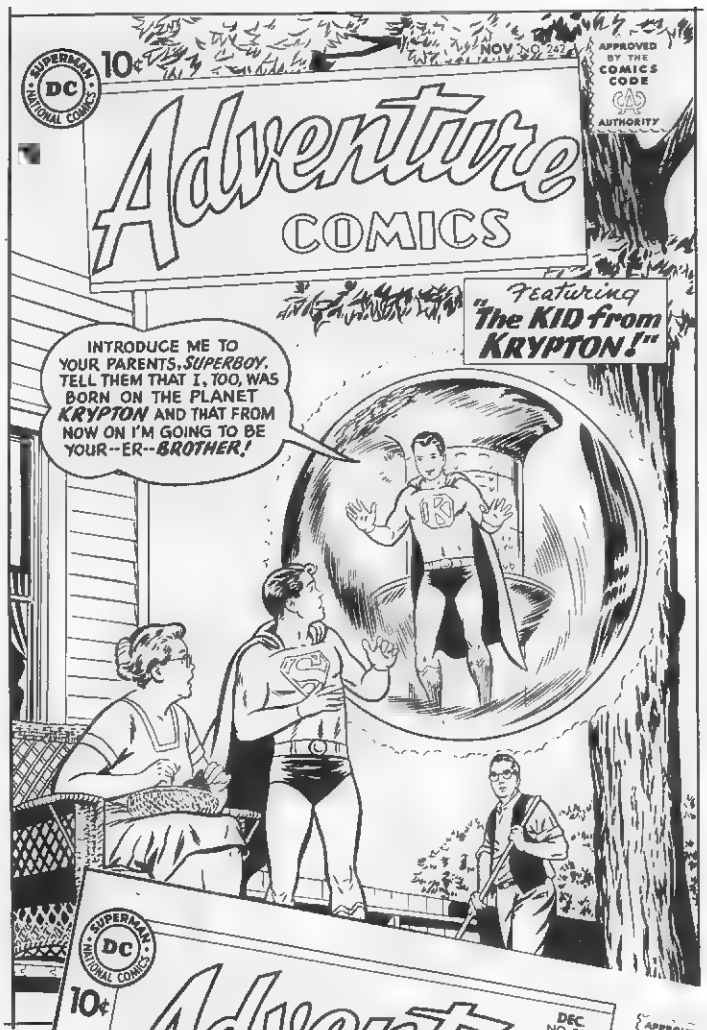
Some artists' work is made memorable by a single panel, a story, a series. Curt Swan is remembered for his faces. If any comic character has a face as real as a living human's, it is the face of Superman. And that face, no matter which artist renders it, is a Curt Swan image.

A creator's personality is reflected in his creations; that's true in every artistic field of endeavor. It says something about Curt Swan that his reputation is built squarely on his remarkable ability to communicate the depth of emotion in his simple line drawings of faces. It's an unusual reputation in comics, for in a field noted for its lack of subtlety, here is fame based on one of the subtlest techniques a comic artist can use, expression.

The reality that Curt communicates through his characters' expressions means that they have to be real people to him. His Clark, Lois, Jimmy, and Perry are all living, breathing people who we can imagine meeting on a street. And to achieve this authenticity Curt has to succeed in giving his creations true independent life, an almost impossible feat.

A prodigious accomplishment like this doesn't happen overnight, of course. Curt has been drawing the Superman family of characters for close to thirty years now, reworking his mental images of them bit by bit as the stories they were involved in changed and grew, constantly adding depth to his mental file of expressions and movements peculiar to each.

Curt came to Superman in a moment of heroic desperation. Desperation for Superman, heroic for Curt, that is. In 1955, after Curt had been drawing a variety of features for DC Comics for ten years, a **Superman 3-D** comic was scheduled. In those


10¢
NOV NO. 267
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
Adventure COMICS
Featuring "The KID from KRYPTON!"
INTRODUCE ME TO YOUR PARENTS, SUPERBOY. TELL THEM THAT I, TOO, WAS BORN ON THE PLANET KRYPTON AND THAT FROM NOW ON I'M GOING TO BE YOUR--ER--BROTHER!

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10¢
NOV NO. 149
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
SUPERMAN
I DID IT... AT LAST I'VE KILLED SUPERMAN! NOT A SIGN OF LIFE IN HIM... HIS BODY IS TURNING GREEN FROM KRYPTONITE POISONING! CRY YOUR HEARTS OUT, FOLKS!
GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST! LUTHOR HAS FINALLY DONE WHAT NO ONE ELSE HAS EVER BEEN ABLE TO DO! CHOKE! I CAN'T BELIEVE SUPERMAN IS REALLY DEAD!
Featuring A GREAT THREE-PART IMAGINARY NOVEL... "The DEATH of SUPERMAN!" SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SUPERMAN DIES!

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10¢
DEC NO 267
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
Adventure COMICS
"PRISONER OF THE SUPER-HEROES!"
WHAT A TWIST! EVERYONE ON THIS PLANET HAS SUPER-POWERS EXCEPT THIS CRIMINAL SUPERBOY!
AND THIS KRYPTONITE JAIL WE'RE BUILDING WILL KEEP HIM CAPTIVE FOREVER!
Featuring: COSMIC BOY... SATURN GIRL... LIGHTNING LAD!

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MAY NO. 129
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SUPERMAN
Featuring "The GHOST of LOIS LANE!"
LOIS--YOU'RE HAUNTING ME BECAUSE YOU THINK I KILLED YOU. PLEASE BELIEVE ME--IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
PSSST...JIMMY! SUPERMAN THINKS HE'S SEEING LOIS' GHOST. IT MUST BE HIS GUILTY CONSCIENCE!

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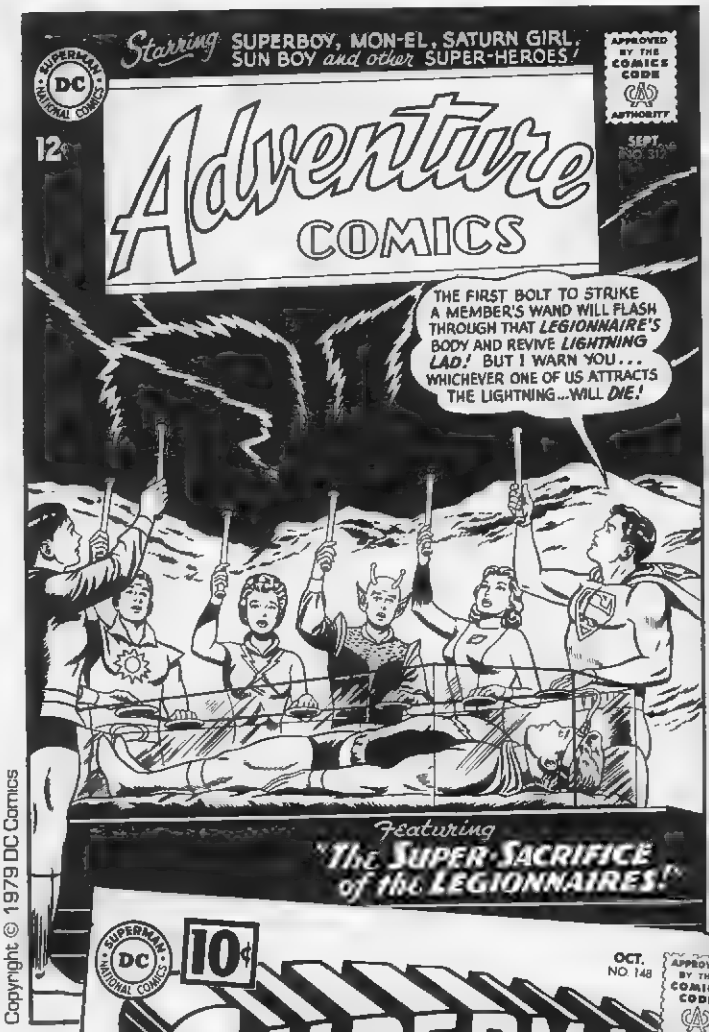
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Adventure COMICS
SEPT. NO. 312
THE FIRST BOLT TO STRIKE A MEMBER'S WAND WILL FLASH THROUGH THAT LEGIONNAIRE'S BODY AND REVIVE LIGHTNING LAD! BUT I WARN YOU... WHICHEVER ONE OF US ATTRACTS THE LIGHTNING...WILL DIE!
Featuring "The SUPER-SACRIFICE of the LEGIONNAIRES!"

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10¢
OCT. NO. 148
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
SUPERMAN
Featuring "The SUPER-MISCHIEF of MR. MXYZPTLK!"
IS IT A MAN... IS IT A BIRD? NO--IT'S A JAILBIRD!
GREAT KRYPTON! THAT IMP FROM THE FIFTH DIMENSION HAS USED HIS MAGICAL POWERS TO TURN EVERY ONE OF THESE PRISONERS INTO A SUPERMAN!

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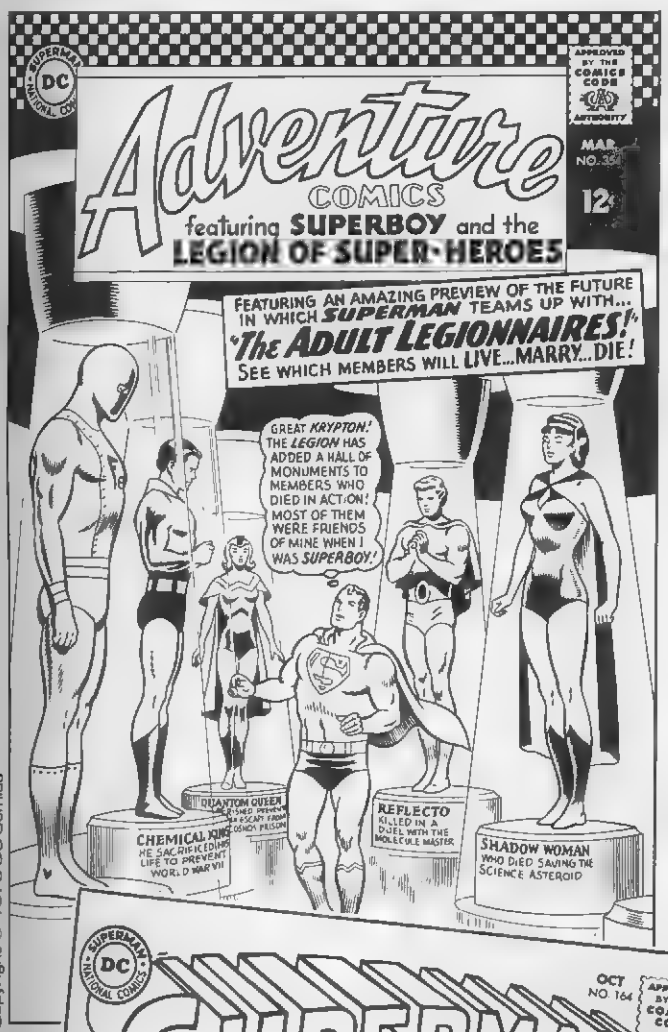
days, each artist had relatively regular assignments that went unchanged for years at a stretch, and magazine schedules were even more stable, so this additional **Superman** magazine created a massive problem. As Curt recalls it, everyone was asked to pitch in on **Superman** in one way or another, and his role was to pencil part of the 3-D comic. It was that heroic rescue that led to further **Superman** assignments.

The next few years saw Curt's role as **Superman** artist limited principally to covers. He did an occasional **Superman** story, but most of his energy was devoted to the covers of DC magazines, the **Superman** titles included. Then, when Jimmy Olsen received his own magazine, Curt was tapped as his regular penciller.

It was on Jimmy's stories that Curt developed his images of the **Superman** cast, and as time passed he brought those images to every other magazine in the **Superman** family: from his stint as the regular penciller of **The Legion of Super-Heroes** at their prime in the mid-sixties to the **Superman** title itself.

All this culminated in Curt becoming **the** Superman artist in 1970, when he took over as the regular penciller of both SUPERMAN and ACTION COMICS, an assignment he continues with today. These last nine years are enough to count Curt as one of the few artists in comics completely associated with a character, but if the previous two decades are counted, Curt is probably the only comics artist to stay with a major character for a lifetime. This association has helped make his Superman the definitive one that all other artists follow to some degree, no matter how widely divergent their art styles are from Curt's own.


Adventure
COMICS
featuring SUPERBOY and the
LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES
MAR
NO. 354
12¢
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
FEATURING AN AMAZING PREVIEW OF THE FUTURE IN WHICH SUPERMAN TEAMS UP WITH...
"The ADULT LEGIONNAIRES!"
SEE WHICH MEMBERS WILL LIVE...MARRY...DIE!
GREAT KRYPTON! THE LEGION HAS ADDED A HALL OF MONUMENTS TO MEMBERS WHO DIED IN ACTION! MOST OF THEM WERE FRIENDS OF MINE WHEN I WAS SUPERBOY!
CHEMICAL KING
HE SACRIFICED HIS LIFE TO PREVENT WORLD WAR VII
PHANTOM QUEEN
REFLECTO
KILLED IN A DUEL WITH THE MOLECULE MASTER
SHADOW WOMAN
WHO DIED SAVING THE SCIENCE ASTEROID

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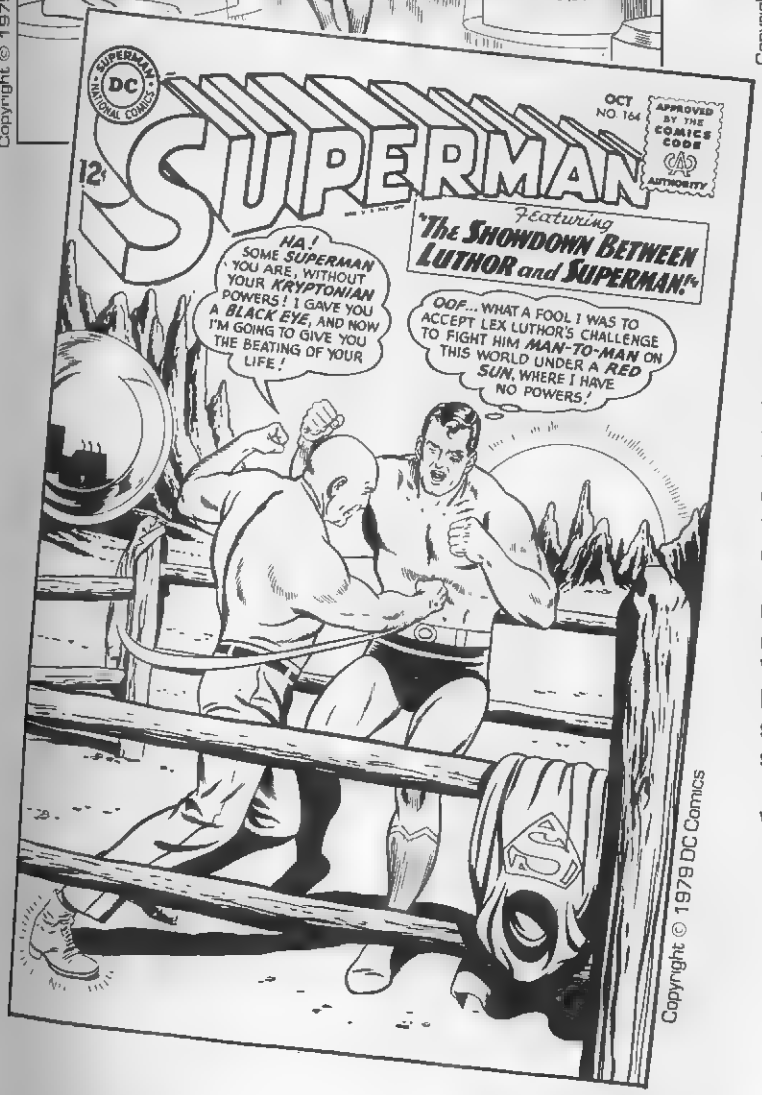
SUPERMAN
OCT
NO. 164
12¢
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
featuring
"The SHOWDOWN BETWEEN LUTHOR and SUPERMAN!"
HA! SOME SUPERMAN YOU ARE, WITHOUT YOUR KRYPTONIAN POWERS! I GAVE YOU A BLACK EYE, AND NOW I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU THE BEATING OF YOUR LIFE!
OOF... WHAT A FOOL I WAS TO ACCEPT LEX LUTHOR'S CHALLENGE TO FIGHT HIM MAN-TO-MAN ON THIS WORLD UNDER A RED SUN, WHERE I HAVE NO POWERS!

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Nor has this lengthy involvement made Curt's work grow stale, or made him slow down from boredom. There's always a new challenge waiting on the next page, an action to be realistically handled that's always been faked before, a reaction to be made real, a vast fictional world to be given the peculiar reality of the draftsman and the illustrator. These pages are developed on Curt's board almost every day, weather permitting. If the reference to the weather seems confusing, just listen to any of Curt's editors on a day when the sun is shining brightly in Westport, Connecticut, and you'll hear them frustratedly complaining that he's taken another day off to play golf. But they're not really grousing, since they know he'll make their deadlines anyway, with room to spare.

For creativity, for caring, for craftsmanship, we salute you, Curt. Because every time one of your pencilled pages crosses a desk, some editor imitates that special smile you give Perry White when he reads a headline scoop in the **Daily Planet.** Because every time one of your stories reaches a news stand, someone shares that warm glow you give Lois Lane when she sees Superman approaching.

And most of all, because every time Clark Kent winks at us, we want to wink back.

Paul Levitz

CONTEST WINNERS
1978
COMIC ART CONVENTION

To the left is one of the winning entries in the photography contest, taken by Bruce Mittelman. Below are some of the poetry winners. CONGRATULATIONS!

THOUGHTS ON MARY JANE BY THE WEB-SWINGING SHUTTER-BUG

GARY R. SPIEWAK

TO TELL OR NOT TO TELL THE QUESTION LIES
FOR ONE IN LOVE THE ANSWER'S HARD ENOUGH
BUT SECRETS KEPT HE FROM HER; AND HE SIGHS,
A HEROS' LIFE SHOULD BE OF STERNER STUFF.
TO CLEAR HIS MIND HE SWINGS, ON WEBS, THROUGH TOWN
IN SEARCH OF EVIL DOERS AND THEIR CRIMES.
AND YET, BENEATH HIS MASK IS STILL A FROWN
FOR CHANCE HE MISSED TO TELL HER, SEVERAL TIMES.
YET BY THIS TIME YOU'D THINK THAT SHE'D HAVE GUESSED
THE SECRETS WHICH FROM ALL THE WORLD HE'D HIDE;
AND THOUGH HE KEEPS IT WELL FROM ALL THE REST...
YOU'D THINK THAT IN HIS GIRL HE WOULD CONFIDE.
BUT WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE HAS CONCEALED
HE HAS NOT TOLD NOR, YET, TO HER, REVEALED.

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ADDICT - MARK WILLARD

TEN THOUSAND PANELS, COLORED INSECTS KICKING
A THOUSAND PLOTLINES WE KNOW THE CLIMAX OF
MECHANICALLY I TURN FLIMSY PAGES.
–COINS WASTED ON THIS ONE, THIS ONE, THIS...
BUT THE NEXT: THE LAYOUT SNARES, I'M CAUGHT
A FACE, HAND, SHADOW CRIES ME, ALL OF US
GOLDEN WORDS THRUM GUT-STRINGS
DARK ANCESTRAL VOICES CHORUS IT WAS, IS
SO EVEN LATER, MANY SLOW PAGES AND DAYS
TEXTBOOK IN HAND, I READ ANOTHER COVER
PENCIL TRACES HEROES, NOT THE CHALKBOARD LINES
HEADGEAR, COSTUMES, THE LIVES MEANING-HEAVY...
COMICS! FOR YOUR LITTLE BROTHER? GRINS THE CHECKER
I (FIREFLARE, CAVE-WALL PICTURES, SPACESTARS)
SMILE BACK AT HER, PITYING.

Copyright © 1979 Mark Willard

MARK WILLARD

A RICH COMICS READER ONE DAY
ENCOUNTERED SOME 'ZINES IN HIS WAY.
HE CRIED, "TOO MUCH FANDOM
TO SAMPLE AT RANDOM!"
AND HIS FINANCES ALL WENT ASTRAY.

Copyright © 1979 Mark Willard

SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF - DAVID ALLIKAS

THAT GREENSKIN CAN SQUASH TANKS LIKE ANTS
I'LL BUY; BUT I DO LOOK ASKANCE
AT THIS FACT ALONE·
THAT BRUCE DOESN'T OWN
A PAIR OF NON-LAVENDER PANTS.

Copyright © 1979 David Allikas

"DR. STRANGE" - JOHN SCANLAND

ROILING DARK CACKLES
HOLLOWLY.
HIDDEN JAWS DRIP OF VISCOUS
VENOM.
STABBING LIGHT SMILES
OPENLY.
AETHERIC EYE SEARCHES WIDE
WARY.
STEPHEN STRANGE MUST GREK
WHAT TO SEE.
TO ALL LIFE HIS POWERS BE
PROMISED.

Copyright © 1979 John Scanland

1978 CONTEST WINNERS

PHOTOGRAPHY: VICTOR COMBS, BRUCE MITTELMAN
LIMERICKS: MARK WILLARD, DAVID ALLIKAS
POEMS: MARK WILLARD, GARY SPIEWACK, JOHN SCANLAND
SPLASH PAGE: MARK WILLARD (2), RICHARD KERNS
ART: (N.Y.C.): J. MUTH, FIRST; BOB DOWNS, SECOND; TOM KEOUGH, THIRD
ART (PHILA.): STEPHEN SCHWARTZ, FIRST
COSTUME (N.Y.C.) 1. CHRISTINA DOYLE
2. PETER MOSEN
3. ANGELIQUE TROUVERE
JR. ROBERT SALKOWITZ
COSTUME (PHILA.) 1. LINDA BEHRLE
2. PETER MOSEN
3. CARLA BEHRLE

aardwarks, elves, and fun!
by Phil Sevitus

Ordinarily, only professionals working for the major comic book publishers or syndicates have been featured guests at the Comic Art Convention. This year we are focusing our attention on the new, young, and independent producers of excellent comics who are probably the look of the future in this field. Especially, I'd like to join in my enthusiasm with thousands of appreciative readers of two new titles: ***Elfquest,*** by Wendy and Richard Pini; and***Cerebus the Aardvark,*** by Dave Sim and Denise Loubert. I'm not only fond of these two books, I'm wild about them!

The humans, out of fear and malice, have put the woods to the torch. As the flames consume the trees around them, the elves and wolves look to Cutter, their leader. "Follow me, Wolfriders, to the Caverns of the Trolls!"

. . . . Elfquest 1

More than once I've been asked a tough question. "If you are so involved in the comic book business," someone accuses, "why don't you read them any more?" Well, of course I do read some, skimming through a dozen a month, catching up to an old familiar title now and then. But the accusation is just. I used to read every one that came into my hands, anxiously and thoroughly. I've read tens of thousands during my life (really). Now I don't. I've tried to figure out why.

"Nay! Hiding in the bushes is not for an earthpig born! If Cerebus dies this day, let him die with sword held high!"

. . . . Cerebus 1

I remember the early 1960's, when all of us collectors were very much aware that a new era of comics was upon us. We followed every twist and turn of our favorite character's career. I was startled then one day when a friend asked me when I had read ***Spiderman*** last, and I had to reply that it had been quite a few months ago. He laughed. "Me, too. The stories are all the same now." Both of us had abandoned the same titles which had us anticipating their on-sale dates just a short time before. I suppose that kind of flagging interest has gotten to everyone at some time or another.

Why? Well, it could be me. I'm busier now than ever before. And I have quite a few other interests to occupy my attention. But those are excuses, not reasons. I'm just not as caught up in the fun and the wonder of comics as I once was. Could the fault be in the comics?

"Yet, though driven by savage hunger and half mad with thirst, Cutter is brought up short by a pair of glittering eyes, as green as fresh young leaves! The maiden stands rigid, fear and wonder playing across her exquisite features, and Cutter knows a different kind of thirst as he drinks in the sight of her!"

. . . . Elfquest 2

I've read comic books since the 1940's, off and on, and I confess to being a lifelong addict. When I began reading them, comic books were filled with wonder. So was I. I feasted on the tales of flying men in costumes, underwater princes, flaming humans, heroes who wore red, white and blue, or were faster than a change of mind, or who were brilliantly skillful, not to mention mysterious! Now when I look back I can see how simplified the stories were and how crude the art was. But I read them with gusto for years and years.

I loved comic books not in spite of those crude, unsophisticated stories. I read them because the enthusiasm of the artists and writers came through to me. These men weren't turning out a specified number of pages per week. They followed no formula. They had no shortcuts or previous body of work they could use. They had to carve their way through the uncharted area of a new form of writing and drawing, making their own paths. The excitement of that challenge communicated to me as I read their output.

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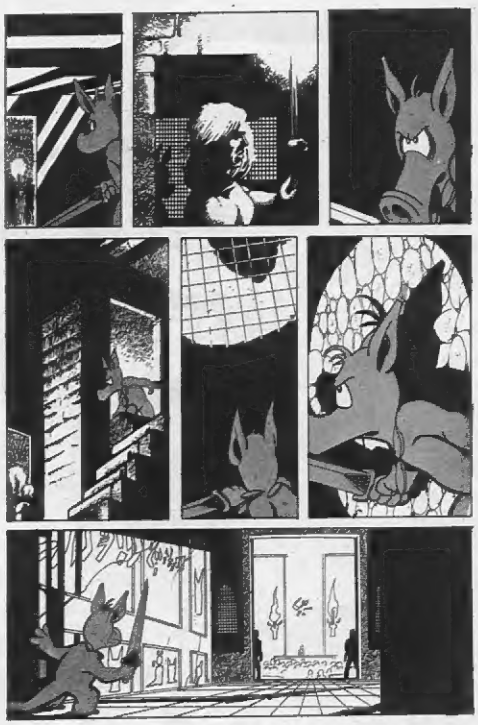

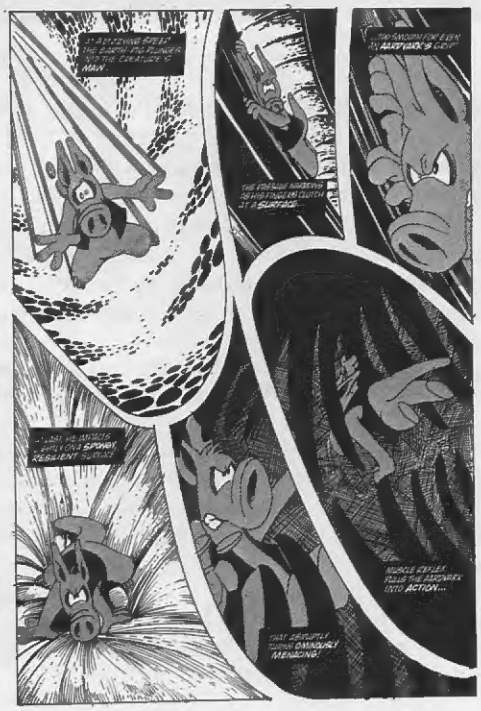

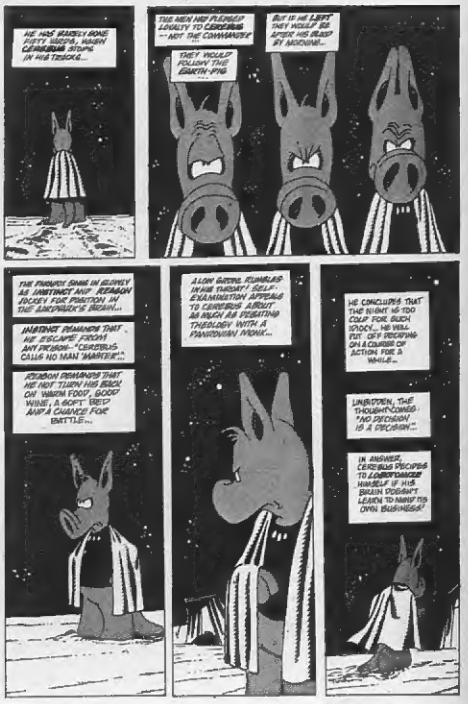

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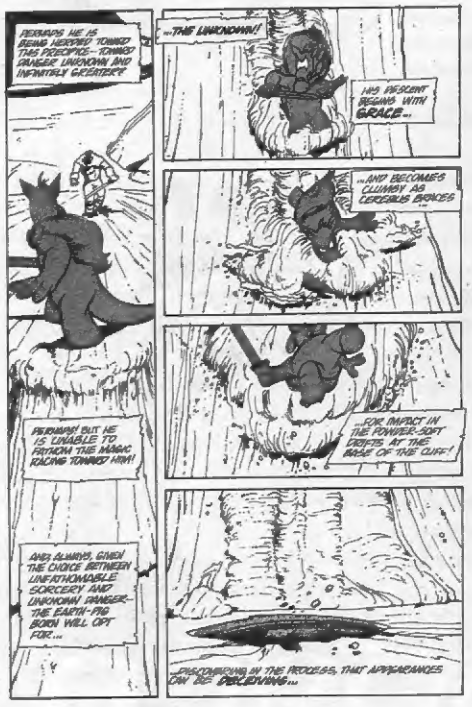
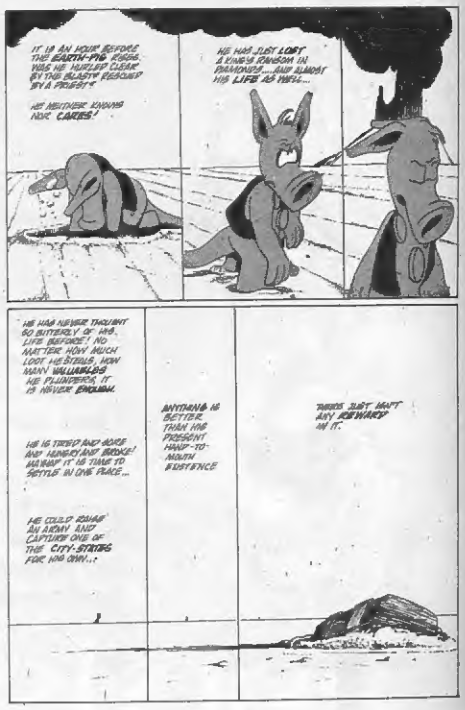
Years later there was a second burst of creative energy, then another. Nowadays there seems to be only an occasional flash. For the most part comic book stories are machine-made, cut-to-a-pattern, culled from a catalog. The artwork is more proficient, technically more adept, more beautiful, illustrative, but unfortunately without the heat or intensity that was once a hallmark of comics. So I read them less.

And that, finally, is the point of this salute to ***Elfquest*** and ***Cerebus.*** Energy and imagination are very much a part of these comics. I can feel the delight that goes into their production, probably because the people who write and draw them are the same people who edit and publish them. Nobody steps between these creators and their muse. The enthusiasm of Wendy Pini for her characters can be seen in the menacing look of an elf who senses danger. (A menacing elf?) The boisterous sense of fun of Dave Sim is evidenced by Cerebus the small, round, half-liter-sized aardvark going into a berserk rage when faced with hordes of the enemy. (A berserk aardvark?.) These people are having fun. So am I.

The freshness and enthusiasm are yours to read for yourself, so I won't dwell on that feature any more. Let's talk about talent. Both artists, Dave and Wendy, are fully professional in their abilities. Both have worked for years at developing their skills, which now are able to carry their storylines anywhere they care to send them. Without a solid foundation of artistic ability, all that enthusiasm would be meaningless. But check out the expressions on the characters' faces, the physical attitudes, the variety of "camera angles," the design of each page, the use of close-ups and long shots, the pace at which the art carries the story forward. They have mastered their medium, these two artists.





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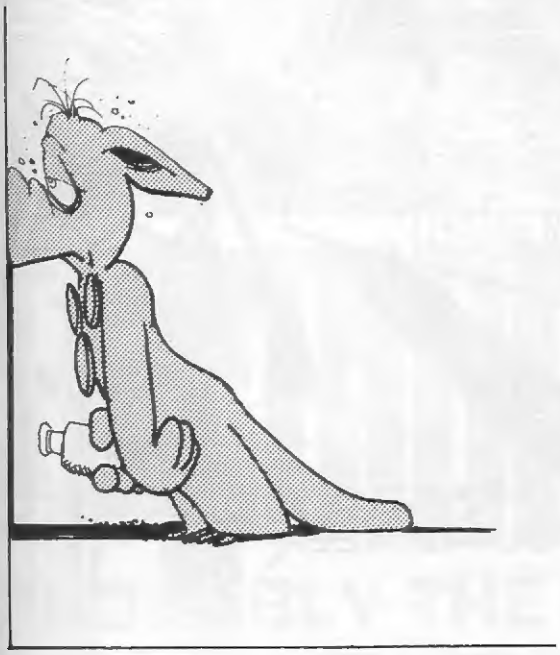
THAT NIGHT A GRAND CELEBRATION IS HELD TO WELCOME CUTTER AND HIS TRIBE.
NEVER HAVE THESE SHY WOOD-ELVES EXPERIENCED SUCH BOISTEROUS GAIETY OR SUCH GENEROUS HOSPITALITY!
MERRY LAUGHTER AND ROLLICKSOME MUSIC ECHO FROM THE HILLSIDES — AS THE WOLFRIDERS TAKE IN EVERY SIGHT, SCENT AND SOUND WITH WIDE-EYED WONDER!

AS CUTTER SPEAKS, HIS SIMPLE, QUIET WORDS CONJURE IMAGES OF THE HOLT— A PLACE OF DEEP-HUED GREEN AND GOLD, OF MOIST, SUPPLE FOLIAGE AND INTOXICATING SCENTS...
...FOR THE WOLFRIDERS LIFE HAD ITS DANGERS AND UNCERTAINTIES — SKIRMISHES WITH SUPERSTITIOUS HUMANS, THE THREAT OF FAMINE WHEN HUNTING WAS POOR --
—BUT IN ALL, THERE WAS ORDER AND BALANCE...



It is a pleasure to read each issue as it arrives, as it once was when ***Batman*** or ***Spiderman*** or ***Donald Duck*** were new and you could warm yourself on the heat of ***their*** creative fires. Maybe some day Dave and Denise will be co-presidents of publishing empire which produces millions of copies of ***Cerebus*** comic books monthly through the efforts of a stable of artists and writers. Maybe some day, Wendy and Richard Pini will have their own major studio, with artists and apprentices abounding. They will deserve their success, but I think I'll miss their personal efforts at that time. And I'll drift away from Cutter and his Wolfriders and away from Cerebus vs. Red Sophis or vs. Bran Mak Muffin.

And hopefully, I'll pick up some new comics published on shoe-string financing, designed and produced with love, created by the hands that first created their images, full of intense care and talent and the life's blood and energy. But while this wonderful time lasts, I'll read every copy of ***Elfquest,*** every episode of ***Cerebus,*** and hope they stay as fine as they are today! This kind of comic book I ***do*** read.

POST SCRIPT: It was always my intention to widen this tribute to include other quality publishers and their products, whose efforts demonstrate the same devotion and vitality cited in the article above. The rush of thought left that area untouched. Let me add briefly a tip of the hat to ***Questar*** by Bill Wilson and Bob Michelucci; to ***Black Lotus,*** of Ed Craddock and Bob Ossowski; and to ***Sal Q. Productions,*** of Sal Quartuccio and Bob Keenan. Thanks for establishing standards of excellence and maintaining them. Keep that good stuff coming!

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS
CEREBUS
ELROD IS SURE THAT GIRL IN THE VAMPIRELLA COSTUME IS GIVING HIM THE EYE...
I WONDER IF I COULD PERSUADE THAT LINEBACKER OVER THERE TO LET ME SMEAR HIM WITH GREEN BODY PAINT FOR THE COSTUME PARADE...
TARIM!

AVAILABLE FROM GOOD OLD UNCLE PHIL, AND HIS SEA-GATE BRIGADE BOX 177, CONEY ISLAND STATION, **YOU KNOW WHERE**, N.Y. 11224... THANKS TO FRED HEMBECK FOR TEACHING ME HOW TO USE THE BOTTOM OF A PAGE.